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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON AL-MOAYAD'S EXTRADITION FROM
GERMANY TO THE UNITED STATES.

NEA/PPD FOR MQUINN, JKINCANNON, TROBERTS

1. SUMMARY: The Extradition of Mohammed Al-Hasan al-Moayad and his aide Mohammed Zayed from Germany to the United States on November 17th to face charges of conspiring to provide material support to the al-Qaeda and Hamas terrorist groups have been mentioned in government, opposition and independent papers. Most papers published factual coverage of the extradition. Government papers including the al-Thawra official daily tracked government reactions to the extradition and ROYG efforts showing seriousness in dealing with the case. A few papers carried commentary on the case. A well-known anti-U.S. weekly, al-Balagh, indicated in its editorial that the extradition will have a negative effect on Yemen's co-operation with the U.S. Pro-Islamist newspapers such as Annas independent weekly carried no commentary on the extradition but urged the government to exert all possible efforts in support of al-Moayad before the U.S. courts. END SUMMARY.

2. Without commenting on the extradition, "Al-Thawra" (November 18) reported that President Saleh instructed the government to double efforts and contacts with the U.S. authorities in Washington and the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a with regard to al-Moayad and his aide who were extradited from Germany to the U.S. November 17.

3. Al-Thawra (November 19) published reports tracking the government's reactions including Foreign Minister Dr. al-Qirbi's meeting with the U.S. Charge d'Affaires Alan Misenheimer in which Dr. al-Qirbi renewed his request to send al-Moayad back home and informed the U.S. Charge that it has not been proven that al-Moayad and his aide were involved in any illegal actions. COMMENT: News reporting does not reflect the full scope of the Foreign Minister's comments at the meeting. END COMMENT.

4. Anti-American weekly "Al-Balagh" (November 18) published an op-ed article probing what it described as "the secrets" behind the detention of al-Moayad outside Yemen and raising concerns over his trial in a U.S. court. Al-Balagh said that "trying al-Moayad in Yemen would make Yemen's co-operation with the U.S. in counter-terrorism more acceptable to the people of Yemen." The paper indicated that the repeated visits by FBI Director Robert Mueller to Yemen played a role in accelerating the extradition of al-Moayad to the U.S.

5. "Al-Shura", weekly of the Popular Forces Union, (November 16) published an op-ed article commenting on the Yemeni-U.S. counter-terrorism cooperation which al-Shura described as "deficient". The paper indicated that "in spite of Yemen's unlimited co-operation with the U.S. in the fight against terrorism Washington insisted on the extradition of al-Moayad to America and disregarded Yemen's request to send him back home."

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